

Message Text

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TO USMISSION NATO PRIORITY

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C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 205025

E.O.11652: GDS

TAGS: ETRD, ENRG, XH, NATO

SUBJECT: NATO SYMPOSIUM ON ENERGY

REF: (A) NATO 4895; (B) NATO 4725; (C) STATE 202267

1. DEPARTMENT APPRECIATES MISSION'S DESIRE AVOID
APPEARANCE OF OBSTRUCTIONIST TACTICS WITH RESPECT TO
SYMPOSIUM WHICH ALL OTHERS FAVOR AND AGREE THAT SUGGESTION
OF OTHER TOPICS MAY BE MOST DESIRABLE WAY OF DEFLECTING
ISSUE (PARA 5 REFTEL B). IN ADDITION TO CONSIDERATIONS ON
MIDDLE EAST NOTED REFTEL C, WHICH ARE MORE COGENT THAN
PREVIOUSLY, WE WISH TO AVOID NARROWER BELGIAN-FRENCH
PROPOSAL FOR SYMPOSIUM ON EAST-WEST ENERGY COOPERATION
BECAUSE POSSIBLE US-SOVIET GAS DEALS WOULD INEVITABLY
BECOME CENTERPIECE FOR DISCUSSION WHICH, IN VIEW OF
COMPLEXITY OF ISSUES INVOLVED, MIGHT NOT BE HELPFUL TO US
CONSIDERATION OF PROBLEM. IN OUR VIEW, THE SYMPOSIUM COULD
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WELL LEAD TO CONSIDERABLE PUBLICITY DESPITE OUR BEST EFFORTS

TO AVOID DRAMATIZATION. FYI. SIGNIFICANT ISSUES REMAIN TO BE RESOLVED IN US-SOVIET TALKS, SUCH AS PRICE OF GAS, TANKER OWNERSHIP, TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER, ETC., BEFORE USG CAN COMMIT ITSELF TO INVOLVEMENT IN LNG PROJECTS. MOREOVER, EXTENSIVE INFORMATION ON SOVIET EXTERNAL FINANCIAL POSITION WOULD BE REQUIRED BEFORE FINANCING OF SUCH LARGE PROJECTS COULD BE CONTEMPLATED. FINALLY, NATURE OF US-JAPANESE-SOVIET COOPERATION IN YAKUSTK PROJECT STILL UNCLEAR. THESE AND OTHER ISSUES ARE CURRENTLY UNDER STUDY BY INTERAGENCY

WORKING GROUP AND US FIRMS INVOLVED AND ARE NOT A MATTER OF PUBLIC RECORD. DEPARTMENT VERY CONCERNED THAT SOVIETS WOULD MISREAD DISCUSSIONS IN AN UNCLASSIFIED MEETING BY UNINFORMED INDIVIDUALS AS STATEMENTS OF OFFICIAL GOVERNMENT POLICY. END FYI.

2. MISSION, IN ACCORDANCE WITH SUGGESTIONS CONTAINED REFTELS A AND B, MAY THEREFORE INDICATE US SUPPORT FOR A SYMPOSIUM, FIRST, ON "DEVELOPMENTS IN COMECON" INCLUDING RECENT COMECON INTEREST IN INCREASED CONTACT WITH EC OR, SECOND, "SOVIET TECHNOLOGICAL GAP." IF MISSION ABLE PERSUADE ECONADS TO ACCEPT ONE OF THESE TOPICS, YOU MAY INDICATE OUR WILLINGNESS TO FACILITATE PARTICIPATION OF US EXPERTS. KISSINGER

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